

**TRANSPORT DEPARTMENT**  
**ROAD SAFETY STRATEGY IN THE STATE**

Expansion in the road network, motorization and urbanization in the country in general and Andhra Pradesh in particular has led to the increase in road accidents. The growth rate of vehicles is around 14%. As on 31.12.2011 the total number of vehicles in Andhra Pradesh is 110.00 lakh of which 73% are two wheelers. The year-wise number of accidents in the state is given as under.

<b>Year ( Calendar)</b>	<b>No. of Accidents</b>	<b>% growth</b>	<b>No. of deaths</b>	<b>% Growth</b>	<b>No. of persons Injured</b>	<b>% growth</b>
<b>2004</b>	39390		10621		53898	
<b>2005</b>	38913	-1.21	11098	4.49	52554	-2.49
<b>2006</b>	42867	10.16	12606	13.59	59453	13.13
<b>2007</b>	45163	5.36	13791	9.40	63072	6.09
<b>2008</b>	46389	2.71	14529	5.35	64526	2.31
<b>2009</b>	45977	-0.88	15203	4.63	61894	-4.07
<b>2010</b>	44570	0.92	15696	6.11	57032	-4.15
<b>2011</b>	42869	-3.82	15100	-3.80	55812	-2.14

Road traffic injuries are one of the leading causes of deaths, disabilities and hospitalizations with severe socio economic costs across the world. The costs of accidents include medical costs, collateral damage to property and motor vehicle, loss due to income foregone due absence from work, impairment/disability or untimely death besides other legal and administrative costs.

Road safety is a function of education, engineering and enforcement functions. As a part of creating awareness among the citizens, the transport department is regularly conducting road safety awareness campaigns in all the districts. Further awareness is being created through special camps and campaigns undertaken by the district administration. Road safety awareness is also made mandatory for all persons undertaking a learner licence test. In addition a large numbers of NGO's are undertaking an active role in promoting road safety awareness through government of India funding.

Alarmed at the increasing number of road accidents, transport department launched road safety programme in the name of SAFAR (Safety Always For All Roads) on 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct'2005 and the programme is being continued.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Road safety week is organized at the national level from Jan1-7, 2012 with the theme "**Accidents bring tears Safety brings cheer**"

The roads and building department is constantly undertaking improvement of black spots which are accident prone. Under the National Highway Program linkages are being done with the hospitals to serve as traumatic care centres.

Active enforcement is being done by the police and transport departments. A large number of gadgets such as laser guns, breath analysers, surveillance cameras and cranes have been acquired to increase the enforcement work.

An analysis of road accidents indicates that around 80% of the road accidents are due to drivers fault. Given the advanced technologies of vehicles today only 2% of the accidents/fatalities is due to defects in the motor vehicles. With a view to mitigate the number of road accidents in the state, the transport department has initiated a number of measures:

- Streamlining the Licensing system of drivers: The department has introduced computer based learner licence test to assess the knowledge of drivers. In addition the department has introduced slot booking system through e-seva, RTO office counters and the internet for scheduling the learner licence test and the driving test.
- Driving test has been made rigorous through strict testing on driving tracks. All districts have a driving test track.
- Heavy motor vehicle driving schools have been asked to register all candidates who are undergoing training. Only those registered with the department online are permitted to take a test for obtaining a heavy motor vehicle licence.
- Enforcement by police and transport department has been made more intensive to book violations under the MV act ( with reference to driving and overloading of goods and passenger vehicles)
- Contract carriages are being constantly monitored and checked for carrying commercial goods at the cost of the safety of the passengers.
- Sub-inspectors of police have been authorized to check all visible offences.
- Auto rickshaws are prohibited on the national highways.
- Driving licences of drivers involved in fatal and grievous accidents are being suspended.
- District road safety committees have been reconstituted with District Collector as Chairman for effective monitoring and taking remedial measures.
- Interceptor vehicles fitted with laser guns, breath analysers and surveillance cameras and pollution testing equipment have been provided to Hyderabad, Rangareddy, Visakhapatnam, Vijayawada and Chittoor districts to check violations.

- A number of gadgets such as laser guns for detecting speeding vehicles; breath analysers for detecting drunken driving and mobile interceptors for detecting overloaded, speed and polluting vehicles have been procured and provided to the transport and police department.
- Surveillance Cameras have been provided to the Police Department. Erected at 11 identified junctions in the twin cities of Hyderabad and Secunderabad. E-challans are being generated by the police department for all offences detected.
- Six Heavy duty cranes have been supplied to the police departments to enable removal of stranded and accident vehicles on the important national highways. The department plans to acquire another 10 cranes to cover all national highways.
- The health department is identifying a large number of hospitals to serve as traumatic care centres in addition to providing immediate emergency assistance through 108. This facility enables precious lives to be saved with minimum delay by deploying 225 ambulances spread across highways. Average No. Of road accidents attended per day is 1130. The average reach time (from base to scene) is 15 – 20 minutes. And the 108 ambulances are available for every 30 – 40 K.Ms. The cases are shifted by 108 ambulances to private hospitals, community health centres, area hospitals or corporate hospitals depending on proximity and the facilities available for a particular emergency. In case of major accidents where scanning is necessary to determine injury, 108 service accepts referral cases.
- An Empowered Committee is constituted under the Chairmanship of Principal Secretary to Government (Transport) to implement the Road Safety Action Plan (World Bank Scheme) involving all the line Departments.
- Road Safety Council under the Chairmanship of Hon'ble Chief Minister is being constituted at state level to provide leadership and direction at the highest level in view of the magnitude of the problem.
- Accident prone areas are being categorized into AB and C on the roads of NHs, R&B and Panchayat Raj etc., involving line Departments concerned for improvement on priority basis and to get high rate of positive results with the Road Safety Measures being taken by the Government.
- The Driving licences of the vehicle drivers involved in fatal road accidents are being suspended regularly.

In conclusion, while Government of Andhra Pradesh is taking several measures towards road safety improvement. Ultimately road safety is a concern of each and every one in the state. Road safety is a function of several factors, since most accidents occur due to rash and negligent driving, the vehicle users must learn to adopt defensive driving as opposed to offensive and rash driving. They must wear seatbelts and helmets at all times.

Drunken driving is dangerous and needs to be avoided at all costs. Use of cell phone while driving should be avoided for the safety of passengers. Concern must be shown to the pedestrian traffic the old and young children. All vehicles must be insured so to enable the inured and the deceased to get adequate claim and compensation. The public must travel by public transport.